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## HOW AMERICA MAY CONTRIBUTE TO THE PERMANENT PEACE OF THE WORLD

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How can America—how can the United States—contribute to the settlement of this war in such a way that we may hope for an extended reign of peace, if not for permanent peace?

I will confess to you that I would not have come before you if I hadn't believed that there was something that we could do, something that we could propose, some concrete aim that might be promoted by our assembling here tonight and talking this matter over. What is it that we can do?

In the first place, let me say that I believe it to be as true today as it was yesterday, as true in international concerns as it is in all our other affairs, that the kingdom of heaven cannot be taken by storm. We shall not, by any trick or device of statesmanship, achieve a permanent and enduring peace at the end of this war. If we shall have advanced the cause of permanent peace by a single stage on the long journey that lies between us and Utopia, we shall have done well. I have spent much time during the last few months with some ardent spirits—lovers of peace, men and women of goodwill—in the hope of determining how best we can bring the public opinion of the United States to bear, with a view to the termination of the war when the proper time for that shall seem to have arrived and with a view to aiding in the creation of a public sentiment in Europe which will result in a decent, magnanimous and not a predatory and defective peace, a peace which will not sow dragon's teeth of future wars, and which shall also picture to the bankrupt statesmanship of Europe the desirability of nations living together in concord; perhaps even of modeling their institutions more upon those that we have established on this side of the Atlantic, looking forward toward that federation of the world to which the poet has pointed the way. But the more I work with these groups of incurable optimists, the more convinced I become that salvation does not lie in any attempt to realize such large aims as that in such a direct

and immediate way. I feel more and more that the problem is one of civilization. The process that will lead us to peace and civilization is a long process, one in the education of experience. But in the meantime what can we do to forward it?

Let me mention one thing that I think we should not do. I do not believe that we, the people of the United States, should join with any power or group of powers in Europe with a view to maintaining the peace of the world by the sword. In the first place, I believe profoundly in the truth of the saying that he who takes the sword shall perish by the sword. I do not believe that any good thing is ever accomplished by violence. In the second place, if it is a good thing for Europe to maintain peace by military force, it is a good thing for us to keep out of.

It has been well said that the governments of the world are in a way superfluous, if not artificial, survivals from—was it the Stone Age? Some prehistoric period, anyway. That the real government of the world is an invisible government made up of the great industrial and intellectual and moral forces which actually control the actions of men. Superimposed upon this invisible government we have these relics of mediaevalism, our political and military governments, which have very little function left excepting to plunge into chaos this modern world which they do not understand. The world—the modern world—has become a great industrial commonwealth, one single web woven of a thousand million strands of mutual interests and mutual sympathies, and the question for us is: What can we, the people of the United States, do to preserve the integrity of that web?

I believe, in the first place, that we can best do it by keeping our own part of the web from disintegration. I believe that we can best do it by maintaining our tradition of peace and our habit of peaceful living; by setting our faces resolutely against every incitement to militarism, from whatever source it may come; by refusing to be stirred by panic cries of danger when there is no danger; by remembering that from our geographical position, from our relations of amity with the whole world, we are as safe from attack as any nation ever has been in human history. The point that I wish to insist upon is this: that we must not be driven by panic into adopting an attitude of militarism towards the rest of the world, as the nations of Europe were driven by panic into the militarism which finally

resulted in this war. In that way destruction lies, and nothing but destruction. We are, then, to maintain our position as a pacific, peace-loving people.

And in the second place, we are, by virtue of our position in the world, the great neutral, as well as the great pacific, power. As such we owe to all other neutral peoples a duty—the duty of leading them in the ways of peace—of coöperating with them in the great work of making the world a world in which a nation shall be free to lead a peaceful life without undue interference from nations that are still dominated by the war spirit. And it seems to me that this duty cannot be properly discharged by us if we continue to work alone and for the protection solely of our own national interests; it requires us to get into close working relations with all other neutral peoples, to enter into conference with them with a view to common, concerted action for the protection of neutral rights and interests.

In the third place, we are, in a peculiar sense, trustees of one of the chief goods of civilization, the international law of the world, that body of rules and principles which represents what Gladstone called “the public right” of Europe and the civilized world—perhaps the greatest achievement of the international mind, during the last hundred years. This public right has no sanction, in the strict legal sense. No military force, no international police stands behind it, to give it power. It rests solely upon the public opinion of the civilized world—and the public opinion of half the world is paralyzed by war, and that of the other half is benumbed by fear or by indifference. It is for us, I believe, to come out into the daylight, to take our place in the sun, and to stand for these violated principles of international law, to the end that public right shall not perish from the earth.

Then, lastly, there is another function which the United States may well perform. We are on terms of growing intimacy, arising out of a growing understanding, with the other republics of this western world. It seems to me that we shall do more for the cause of durable peace if we begin by creating an international community in the Americas, which shall be held together by the binding ties of peace, amity, mutual interest and good-will. In other words, I do believe in a league of peace, provided it is a league of peace in which it is proposed to live by peace and not by war; and it seems

to me that we are in a position to create such a league, perhaps first among the republics of this western hemisphere, the Latin American states with ourselves, and then, next, with all other neutral powers or rather, shall I say, all other pacific powers, those that have laid aside, if they ever cherished, the fatal ambitions of national greatness, to be promoted by violence and force, which have brought the greater part of Europe to its present pass.

Therefore, I propose as the methods by which we may hope to contribute to the permanent peace of the world: First, that we shall at all hazards and in the face of all dominions and powers, steadfastly maintain our honorable position as a pacific nation, a nation that seeks her ends by the righteous ways of persuasion and good-will and not by force of arms; second, that we shall, as soon as possible, enter into close relations of amity and, if possible, into a durable league of peace with the other states of the western world; third, that we shall, without delay, enter into conference with a view to some such permanent relation with every other neutral and pacific power; and, lastly, that we shall do everything that lies in our power to build a new international law, remembering that the world—the real world in which we live and move and have our being—has become industrial and, therefore, peaceful, and that war—once the normal condition of man—has become abnormal, an anachronism to be outlawed; and, therefore, that this new international law shall not be written, as international law has heretofore been written, by belligerents for belligerents, but that it shall be written from the point of view of the neutral powers and in the interests of neutrality and peace. What that may mean in the way of enlarging the isles of safety in the world, the areas of land and water permanently dedicated to peace, what in the way of freeing neutral commerce, no one can yet say. Nor can we have any assurance that we shall be permitted to play an important rôle in the conference which will settle the terms of peace at the close of this war. But this, at least, is certain, that we cannot be excluded from any conference which shall settle the international law of the civilized world, and it will be there that we shall make our impress and exert a real influence in the direction of an enduring peace.

You will observe that this is a modest program; that it does not bring us very close to the millennium. It will take us only a step or two in that direction. I conceive that there will still be wars and

rumors of war in the years to come. But I hope and believe that the Europe that will emerge from this catastrophe will be a chastened Europe, and that the belligerent nations will make a serious effort to live together, and little by little form the habit of living together, in peace and amity. But whether that comes about or not, and whether we can by our example and precept contribute to that end or not, the fact remains that it rests wholly with us to determine whether we shall be a pacific nation in the future, as we have been mainly in the past, and whether we shall or shall not extend the area of peace by drawing within the circle of our amity and concord the South and Central American states and the other nations of the world that choose to walk hand in hand with us in the ways of peace.